

American Society of Botanical Artists
25th Annual Meeting and Conference
Pittsburgh 2019

A Technical Tale of Tone
Esmée Winkel

Saturday, October 19, 2019
9:00 am – 4:00 pm
(full-day classes include a one-hour lunch break)



This class will focus on the theory of light and how Esmée translates that onto 2D paper in both ink and watercolor. She will explain the stippling technique in ink and how she creates shadows with watercolor. Participants can then work in either technique.

Supply List

• Paper:

For watercolor – use paper with a very smooth surface, ‘hot pressed’ or HP. There are various good HP watercolor papers available such as Fabriano, Hahnemühle or Arches. Depending on the brand some papers are very white or more cream colored. For example Arches is a more cream colored paper. I work on Fabriano 5 (old batch) or Arches.

For Ink – use a very smooth technical inking paper. These are papers specifically made for technical drawings. Also architects, designers and other illustrators use these types of paper. I prefer working on Schoellershammer paper. It is very smooth, easier to correct on and a little bit cream colored.

• Brushes – sable brushes are best for fine detailed work. There are various good watercolor brushes available such as Raphael 8048 or Windsor & Newton Series 7. I like working with brushes from Da Vinci – Maestro Kolinsky 10, size 2. The brush hairs are not too long and in my experience the brush stays very pointy during painting.

• Paint – use paint that is in the top two categories for lightfastness. Some examples of Paint manufacturers are Daniel Smith, Windsor & Newton, Schmincke, M. Graham & Co. and others, but keep in mind that these paint manufacturers produce different types of paint. For example, ‘professional’ or ‘student’ paint, permanent or non-permanent, sometimes they change their products for many reasons or due to circumstances not under their control. Always check your paints. At the moment I use Windsor & Newton artist’s watercolor.

• Pen and Ink – for illustrations I always work with rOtring pens, various sizes, and accompanying ink. ROtring ink is good as well as other quality pigmented ink such as Chinese ink. These pens are very expensive so if you do not have these, bring good fineliners that have very black ink. I have been told Staedtler among others has very black ink. If you have old rOtring pens at home that don’t seem to work anymore, bring them anyway!

- Other useful materials:

Sketching paper, tracing paper, graphite pencils, eraser, your paint palette/dish, your water jar and cotton towel, a magnifying lens, specimen jar. Some artists like to work on a drawing board/ foam board, or have a folded board to put behind their specimen. Sometimes it is easier to study the subject if there is no interrupting background and a white or black folded board is placed behind the specimen. Please bring other personal items you normally use when drawing, painting or inking!

- Do not forget to bring a good portable battery-operated lamp!

Instructor's Bio

Esmée Winkel works as a scientific illustrator for Naturalis Biodiversity Center and in her spare time she loves painting unique plants at the Hortus Botanicus. Her work has received the Jill Smythies award, RHS Gold Medals 2013, 2016, 2018 and the ASBA Botanical Illustrator Award for Excellence in Scientific Botanical Art.